1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

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1995 REVIEW AND EXTENSION CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE TREATY ON THE NON-PROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 8th MEETING

Held at United Nations Headquarters, New York,
on Friday, 21 April 1995, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. DHANAPALA (Sri Lanka)

CONTENTS

GENERAL DEBATE (continued)

ELECTION OF VICE-PRESIDENTS

REQUEST FOR OBSERVER STATUS

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The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

GENERAL DEBATE (continued)

1. Mr. HURST (Antigua and Barbuda) said that at the time when the Treaty on The Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons had been readied for signature, Antigua and Barbuda had still been a colony. All but six of the States which had achieved independence since 1970 had understood the dangers of nuclear weapons and nuclear war and had become signatories to the Treaty.

2. The primary benefit of the Treaty was its containment of the spread of nuclear weapons to additional States, thereby reducing the risk of nuclear war and nuclear accidents. However, the Treaty had failed to limit the number of nuclear weapons, so that the nuclear-weapon States now had more nuclear weapons than in 1970. Despite the nuclear disarmament measures taken by the nuclear-weapon States, and the security assurances in Security Council resolution 984 (1995), a great deal more remained to be done.

3. The terms of the Treaty and related agreements needed to be made sufficiently attractive to achieve universal acceptance. That would be difficult to achieve, however, since the interests of many States were diametrically opposed. Several States wanted their perceived advantages to be made permanent, while others wished to end their evident disadvantage and elicit greater security assurances from the powerful. Yet, if the remaining 13 sovereign States did not accede to the Treaty, the future which awaited mankind would be even more uncertain and dangerous than in the past.

4. His delegation was greatly concerned about the vulnerability of small island States to nuclear-weapons testing. Threatened by global warming and rising sealevels, such States could not successfully deal with nuclear fallout from nuclear testing; the islands would have to be abandoned, effectively ending those countries' very existence. Every unilateral moratorium on weapons testing must become legally binding and permanent. The Treaty of Tlatelolco protected the small island States of the Caribbean; the Treaty of Rarotonga could do the same for the small island States of the South Pacific if the nuclear-weapon States signed that Treaty and its protocols. It defied reason for large and powerful democratic States to refrain from giving legally binding assurances to small island States which could not possibly threaten them or do them harm.

5. Antigua and Barbuda supported an indefinite extension of the Treaty on the understanding that the nuclear-weapon States would continue to accelerate their efforts towards complete nuclear disarmament.

6. Mr. GOLOB (Slovenia) said that the Treaty had been the first multilateral treaty to which the Republic of Slovenia had succeeded; it had done so in the hope that the Treaty would be a step towards the total and final prohibition of testing and of nuclear weapons. The Treaty had served the world well and had survived the end of the cold war; Slovenia hoped that it would be indefinitely extended. In the post-cold-war era, there were strong grounds for extending the Treaty. There was a marked trend towards individualization of the national

policies of many countries, even those that were members of integrations or defence organizations; that trend was not altogether negative, but it would be unacceptable if it went beyond the limits defined by the Treaty.

7. A number of occurrences in recent years had shown that there was only a thin line separating the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes and attempts at developing nuclear weapons. International crime syndicates and others that might exploit lax safeguards posed another threat. The role of the Treaty therefore remained vital. Slovenia believed that it provided a sound basis for attaining the goal of eliminating the nuclear threat by creating a nuclear-free world. Lack of progress towards disarmament was not a reflection of the quality of the Treaty but a result of lack of will by States parties.

8. The threshold States, mostly developing countries that were spending enormous amounts on nuclearization on the grounds that it would enhance their security, should follow the positive examples of Argentina and Brazil, and of South Africa. In all those cases denuclearization had been helped by mutual trust.

9. It was, first and foremost, the permanence of the Treaty which could help improve the atmosphere. In addition, it was crucial for nuclear-weapon States to take specific measures for complete nuclear disarmament and to enhance their security assurances. The recent assurances made by the nuclear-weapon States, and Security Council resolution 984 (1995), were an initial step. Security assurances would play a very significant role for quite a time until complete nuclear disarmament was attained; they would need to be included in a multilaterally binding instrument.

10. Slovenia hoped that a comprehensive test-ban treaty would be concluded by 1996, and that efforts to achieve a ban on the production of fissionable materials for nuclear weapons would be further intensified. The export control regime of nuclear substances must be enhanced in order to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons. That step should not impede nuclear technology tests for peaceful purposes.

11. The progress achieved in Africa, Latin America and the South Pacific in establishing nuclear-free zones was encouraging. Slovenia welcomed the expanding circle of Contracting Parties to the Treaty, particularly those States which had given up nuclear weapons and joined the Treaty as non-nuclear-weapon States.

12. Slovenia believed that indefinite extension of the Treaty would promote confidence-building and mutual trust and enhance the disarmament process. However, confidence created in that way would soon fade away if not underpinned by true progress in nuclear disarmament. It was vital that the Conference should determine that all the essential issues had been thoroughly reviewed and that further progress in the disarmament process was viable.

13. Mr. VELAYATI (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that in a new global milieu and in a much more representative international community, the Conference was a significant opportunity to strengthen the Treaty and the non-proliferation regime in all aspects, thereby enhancing international peace and security. With

the end of the cold war era and bloc rivalries, the need to build a solid foundation for global security was all the greater. The Treaty had paved the way for the achievement of the ultimate objective of nuclear disarmament, but that objective had yet to be accomplished because of the imbalances between the obligations and responsibilities of nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States parties. That situation, together with the non-fulfilment of obligations by nuclear-weapon States parties, were the weaknesses of the Treaty. Those elements merited a thorough and objective review by the Conference with a view to securing a genuine, truly universal and non-discriminatory nuclear non-proliferation regime.

14. A review of the implementation of article I underscored an ever-widening gap between promises and reality. Certain nuclear-weapon States had provided direct and indirect assistance for the development of nuclear-weapon capabilities. It was no secret that some countries which had remained outside the Treaty had gained access to nuclear weapons. Certain nuclear-weapon States which were ostensibly the most active advocates of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons had not only generously provided materials and know-how to Israel to enable it to develop nuclear weapons but also turned a blind eye to Israel's production and stockpiling of weapons of mass destruction, tacitly exempting it from the Treaty, despite its record of reckless expansionism. Furthermore, the apartheid and Israeli regimes had acquired nuclear-weapon capabilities at a time when they had been under international scrutiny, condemnation and sanctions; that would not have been possible without the assistance or, at least, the acquiescence of the nuclear-weapon States and other nuclear-advanced countries.

15. That approach had destabilized the Middle East region and generated spiralling crises. Moreover, the threat posed by Israel's possession of nuclear weapons and its refusal to accept the non-proliferation Treaty and IAEA safeguards had led a number of States in the region to decide not to accede to international instruments prohibiting weapons of mass destruction, most notably the Chemical Weapons Convention. That trend had been devastating for the security of those States as well as to the credibility of the Treaty itself. It also constituted a major impediment towards the universality of the Treaty and the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, which Iran had first proposed in 1974, and ran counter to the objectives of article VII.

16. The failure of nuclear supplier countries to provide complying States parties with material for peaceful purposes was yet another area of non-implementation of commitments. The Treaty unequivocally recognized the peaceful uses of nuclear energy as the legitimate and inalienable right of States parties. For States parties which had faithfully fulfilled their obligations, any discriminatory approach or imposition of restrictive control regimes was totally unjustifiable. Efforts to regulate the transfer of nuclear technology must be transparent and must take place only within the framework of the Treaty.

17. Non-realization of the objectives of article VI was another shortcoming. The nuclear-weapon States had failed to take substantive measures towards complete nuclear disarmament and, instead, had developed and upgraded their

nuclear arsenals in an unbridled fashion. That approach had helped intensify the apprehension of the international community.

18. The Islamic Republic of Iran believed that the Treaty's future should be meticulously intertwined with the periodic examination of progress achieved towards the implementation of a number of measures. First and foremost, a programme of action should be adopted for the significant reduction and total elimination of nuclear warheads and their delivery vehicles within a specific time-frame; the Conference on Disarmament must be fully utilized to begin serious negotiations in that regard. A comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty must be concluded at an early date and a comprehensive, verifiable and legally binding treaty on the prohibition, production and stockpiling of nuclear-weapons-grade fissionable materials should be concluded. Technology and materials for peaceful nuclear activities should be transferred without any discrimination; as it was essential for nuclear supplier countries to undertake not to prevent access of non-nuclear-weapon States parties to nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, cooperation among the parties must be facilitated and expanded. His delegation also believed that secretive groupings with restricted membership that undermined the Treaty should be phased out; on the other hand, agreement must be sought to establish a body representing all the parties, including developing countries; it must conduct its work in a transparent manner. Nuclear-weapon States must provide negative security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States through an international legally binding instrument; in that regard, the recent positive security assurances provided by the Security Council constituted a step in the right direction. Nuclear-weapon States must abide by and adhere to the instruments establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones and must support initiatives taken by the States parties in the regions concerned, with a view to establishing such zones, particularly in the Middle East. As an essential, mutually reinforcing element, all nuclear facilities and installations must be placed under IAEA safeguard systems. Universality of the Treaty must be achieved. In that connection, the reported possession by Israel of nuclear weapons and that country's stubborn refusal to accept international control had a serious destabilizing effect on the Middle East. The resolution of that problem by the international community was an essential requisite to reducing the nuclear threat in the region and paving the way for the achievement of a truly universal Treaty.

19. He believed that the Treaty should be extended indefinitely only after all the obligations set forth thereunder had been fully complied with. In the meantime, the only viable option was a form of extension that was consistent with article X.2, was compatible with the Treaty's objectives and ensured an early realization of the Treaty's purposes and provisions. Indeed, the crucial issue was to arrive at a consensus extension agreement in an atmosphere of mutual trust and cooperation free from any political and economic pressures that were aimed at imposing a specific extension option on States parties. Anything less would lack the moral authority and collective will of States parties.

20. Since IAEA had been established to ensure the full implementation of the Treaty in good faith, it must be strengthened. More credence should be given to its reports and findings, while at the same time effective measures should be adopted to ensure that outlaw regimes like Israel, which stubbornly rejected the Treaty, or States which violated it, were not immune from international

accountability and reprisal. Failure to achieve universality of the Treaty and to ensure the full implementation of its provisions could jeopardize the aspirations of future generations to live in a world free from weapons of mass destruction, particularly nuclear weapons.

21. His delegation would fully support the extension of the Treaty, which it viewed as a legal instrument of paramount importance for the maintenance of international peace and security.

22. Mr. MARTINEZ BLANCO (Honduras) said that the Conference provided the opportunity to enter into serious commitments that might help to avert the threat of nuclear war and to give some thought to the grave danger involved in the proliferation of nuclear weapons and fissionable materials. Fully aware of the danger represented by nuclear weapons and their proliferation, the Latin American and the Caribbean countries, including Honduras, had entered into the Treaty of Tlatelolco as their contribution to the noble cause of denuclearization and economic development because it permitted the utilization of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. Moreover, it established the first nuclear-weapon-free zone in a large inhabited region of the planet. The countries of the region therefore hoped that the Treaty of Tlatelolco would stand as an example for the whole world. Also noteworthy in that regard was the Treaty of Rarotonga which established another denuclearized zone in the South Pacific. His delegation hoped that treaties for a nuclear-free zone in Africa and the Middle East would be concluded in the not too distant future.

23. The Government of Honduras viewed as positive the statements that had been made by the nuclear-weapon States members of the Security Council on new security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States. Those statements contributed to strengthening the non-proliferation regime and to allaying the fears raised by ambiguous nuclear policies. For those reasons, his delegation had voted in favour of Security Council resolution 984 (1995).

24. Expressing concern about the recent cases of illicit trafficking in nuclear materials, he expressed the view that a system of export controls over such materials and technologies was necessary as a security guarantee.

25. Honduras had welcomed the ratification of START I and believed that a prompt ratification of START II would be a positive contribution by the United States of America and the Russian Federation towards nuclear disarmament. Since Honduras believed that the elimination of the production, use and threat of use of weapons of mass destruction would contribute to global security, it supported an indefinite and unconditional extension of the Treaty. It would therefore devote its efforts towards the achievement of that goal and hoped that in the near future the Treaty would become a universal instrument.

26. Mr. CLARE (Jamaica) said that, while the Treaty represented the most important regulatory instrument in the nuclear-arms-control regime, progress in nuclear disarmament over the past 25 years had been slow and there were doubts about how effectively the parties had attempted to reach the objectives of the Treaty. He called on the Conference to undertake a careful assessment of the Treaty's goals to determine to what extent the parties had fulfilled their obligations and facilitated progress towards nuclear and general disarmament.

27. Compliance in all the areas covered by the Treaty had been inadequate and disappointing. Despite encouraging steps recently taken by some of the nuclear-weapon States to halt the nuclear-arms race, the Treaty's goal of restricting the vertical proliferation of nuclear weapons remained unrealized. Likewise, while there had been some success in stemming horizontal proliferation, the Treaty's provisions for nuclear technology transfer had not been faithfully honoured. Non-parties were known to have acquired nuclear capability; in addition to effective safeguards, there was a real need for entrenchment of the international consensus against proliferation. In such a context, the cessation of the nuclear-arms race would remain elusive without an explicit and firm commitment on the part of the nuclear-weapon States to conclude the Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty.

28. The Jamaican Government believed that, before being extended, the Treaty and expectations for its future performance had to be thoroughly assessed in view of existing international realities. The entire international community needed to declare and reaffirm its commitment to achieving the Treaty's objectives by pursuing such complementary arrangements as the Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty and a convention against the production of fissionable material.

29. Moreover, the non-nuclear-weapon States needed security assurances from the nuclear-weapon States. Security Council resolution 984 (1995), reaffirming the responsibilities of nuclear-weapon States to respond to the security concerns of non-nuclear-weapon States, was a step in the right direction. Jamaica also supported the call for greater commitment on the part of the nuclear-weapon States to facilitate access by Treaty parties to nuclear technology for peaceful purposes under article IV. It urged the Conference to issue a declaration expressing the commitment of the nuclear and non-nuclear-weapon States to pursue that objective as well as the other stated objectives of the Treaty.

30. Mr. TESHABAEV (Republic of Uzbekistan) said that the indefinite extension of the Treaty was one of the most reliable means of achieving a secure world. Uzbekistan's decision to support the indefinite and unconditional extension of the Treaty was a logical extension of its nuclear disarmament policy. It called for stricter implementation of all articles of the Treaty, and stressed the necessity of creating nuclear-weapon-free zones, and reiterated its resolute opposition to all weapons of mass destruction. As a member of IAEA, Uzbekistan had assumed responsibilities for implementing and strengthening safeguards and controls on the proliferation of nuclear weapons, and pledged to continue to fulfil those responsibilities in the future.

31. Mr. BULL (Liberia) said that, as a developing country without the technology or inclination to develop nuclear capability, Liberia had realized that becoming party to the Treaty offered the best safeguards as well as possibilities of future access to atomic energy for peaceful uses. It was particularly heartening that 178 States had joined the Treaty, affirming the widespread commitment to the goal of general and complete disarmament. He called on the few remaining States to accede to the Treaty in order to achieve its universality before the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations.

32. Among the achievements of the Treaty had been the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in several regions of the world. Liberia commended the

Republic of South Africa for its accession to the Treaty and for its unilateral decision to dismantle its existing nuclear-weapons programme, which had enabled African countries to finalize a treaty declaring the entire African continent a nuclear-weapon-free zone. Important strides had been made in the nuclear disarmament field, but if the Treaty was to be further strengthened, a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty must be concluded.

33. Liberia welcomed Security Council resolution 984 (1995), by which the nuclear-weapon States reaffirmed the security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States. That important undertaking might be strengthened, however, by the conclusion of a mandatory legal instrument. It was important that IAEA should be strengthened and verification arrangements and safeguards unconditionally enforced.

34. There was nearly universal agreement that the Treaty was vital to the continued survival of mankind, and therefore, should remain in force. Its unencumbered extension would strengthen the Treaty rather than weaken it. The provision for periodic review should allow effective monitoring to ensure full implementation. Liberia, therefore, favoured indefinite extension. Its experience of the devastation caused by its civil war had made it acutely aware of the effects which the availability of weapons could have in prolonging unnecessary suffering.

35. Mr. SNOUSSI (Morocco) said that, in the new strategic environment created by the end of the cold war, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction had become one of the primary concerns of the international community. Its dangers were even more apparent in the light of new and unfamiliar threats to international security. The many bilateral and multilateral agreements concluded in the area of nuclear disarmament over the past 25 years represented important steps towards the complete denuclearization of the planet.

36. The non-nuclear-weapon States, however, still felt a measure of insecurity in a world where some Powers continued to possess nuclear weapons. A comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty remained one of the primary objectives of those States in enhancing their security. Morocco supported the unilateral moratoriums observed by most of the nuclear Powers, along with the negotiations towards an agreement prohibiting the production of fissionable materials.

37. The Treaty remained an effective and vital security regime, which had provided the first line of defence against nuclear proliferation during its 25 years of existence. Morocco believed that the Treaty was essential as the cornerstone of the broader non-proliferation regime between nuclear and non-nuclear States. That regime could be strengthened by the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones throughout the world. The requirements of transfer of technology for development purposes should not be neglected, however.

38. Although recent developments in the Middle East peace process were encouraging, more progress could be achieved if all the States of the region were to take concrete measures to strengthen the non-proliferation regime. Ridding that region of nuclear weapons would benefit not only international peace and security, but the economic and social development of the region. Morocco urged all the States of the region which were not yet party to the

Treaty, particularly those with nuclear capability, to accede to it and to place their nuclear facilities under IAEA full-scope safeguards.

39. The future of the Treaty, whether its extension would be indefinite or of a limited duration, was the concern of all the parties, for neither legal rulings or majority vote could replace an agreement taking into consideration their legitimate interests. Morocco would cooperate closely with all delegations in a productive analysis of the Treaty that would meet the concerns of all the parties.

ELECTION OF VICE-PRESIDENTS

40. The PRESIDENT said that the Group of Non-Aligned and Other States had nominated Trinidad and Tobago to fill the remaining post of Vice-President.

41. Trinidad and Tobago was elected Vice-President by acclamation.

REQUEST FOR OBSERVER STATUS

42. The PRESIDENT said that the Credentials Committee had recommended that the request of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) for observer status to the Conference should be approved.

43. It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 12.05 p.m.